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ABSTRACT

This report discusses the progress made in the development of curriculum materials for the Uralic and Altaic languages. A main point is that the instructional objectives for these languages have changed: the need has shifted from basic courses to solid reference works, such as student manuals, reference grammars, readers, dictionaries, and bibliographies, which can be used by small classes or by individuals working on their own. This will assure the development and the maintenance of a relatively small group of specialists prepared to face emergencies and constituting a reserve of national expertise. An overview is provided of linguistic areas for the development of priority language materials; these areas are divided into Uralic, Altaic, and Tibetan. Generally, priorities are determined in terms of curriculum materials already in existence and those needed, rather than in terms of language popularity. (AM)

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U S O E LANGUAGE MATERIALS CONFERENCE
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URALIC - ALTAIC and INNER ASIAN

Informal Working Paper
Not for Publication

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Defining the Area

Uralic and Altaic languages extend from their westernmost outposts in Europe, namely Finland and Hungary, down to Turkey in the Near East; then, across the Soviet Union west-to-east to the borders of China, accounting for, within this vast landmass, somewhat over a hundred million speakers, of both national languages and languages of regional or cultural significance. From this heartland have sprung many civilizations and cultures that both clashed with and enriched Western Europe during the centuries of the Christian era. At present, the major part of the Uralic and Altaic area falls within the borders of the Soviet Union and of its influence. Although many have counted Korean as Altaic (indeed, evidence mounts to join Japanese to Altaic in the view of some), we shall leave it out of consideration here, largely because Korean is culturally bound with China and Japan -- though once it fell to the Mongols.

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Even today most Americans, including reasonably well-educated ones, are fairly ignorant of major Uralic, Turkic or Mongolian groups, apparently convinced that the 250 millions of the USSR are all Russians. The average citizen may have a grasp of chief South American or even African countries, but when it comes to the interior of the USSR, he has little idea that there are enormous groups of non-Russian Slavs and non-Slavic Turks, closely allied with the Turks of Turkey to be sure (though little is said about that in official Soviet sources), forming nationalities running into 1, 3, 5 or even 10 millions. Just imagine that Kansas and Oklahoma contained in them today a body of 3 million Cherokees (instead of a few thousand), or that Michigan and Wisconsin had 6 million Chippewas, and this will give you some idea of these blocs there.

CENTRAL EURASIA would be the best technical name to give to the area we wish to concentrate on, but more favored seems to be terms like Central Asia and Inner Asia. Of these, Central Asia generally means, following Russian usage, just the five Soviet Union Republics of the Turkmens, Uzbeks, Kirghiz, Kazakhs and Tajik (the last-named being Iranian, not Turkic). INNER ASIA is a broader term that can embrace Mongolian, Turkic and Tibetan linguistic and cultural areas, while excluding China, Iran, Northern Siberia, and so on. Tibetan, it should be noted, is not a Uralic or Altaic language, but just as all of Western Europe drew from Greek and Roman civilization and language, so too do Inner Asian areas draw on Iran, India and Tibet as a source of religion and culture. Hence, Tibet must be included in Inner Asia.

Briefly, then, we wish to embrace, from West to East: Finland and Hungary in Northern and Central Europe; then an area of Finno-Ugric (Uralic) languages running from Karelian (east of Finland, north of Leningrad), down the upper reaches of the Volga (Cheremis, Mordvins, Zyryans, etc.); the Turkic Chuvash in the Central Volga region; then the Turks of the steppe regions, as Kazakhs, Kirghiz, Uzbeks, each of these with speakers running into the millions (and a higher birthrate than the Russians, a fact which the Soviets don't like to think about). On the Anatolian peninsula there is the Republic of Turkey with 30 million inhabitants; in addition there are some millions of Turkic speakers on into Iran and Afghanistan. Going north there are more Turks in Chinese Turkestan (i.e., Sinkiang of the CPR), and lesser Turkic languages spoken in northern and western Siberian areas. Next, there is Mongolian in the MPR, and perhaps 1 to 3 million Mongols in the CPR where according to many reports they are subject to heavy Chinese infiltration and intermarriage with a view towards their absorption. Next, there are minor Siberian languages in the Far North, members of the Tungusic group -- to which group belongs also Manchu, the language of the last Chinese dynasty -- still spoken (figures range from 1/4 million to 2-3 million speakers), but with little political significance. Last, there is Tibet, that unhappy land so brutally crushed by the CPR while the Western world sat by, uninterfering.

State of the Art

Because the Central Eurasian area is highly disparate, consisting of at least 8 to 10 major linguistic or cultural groups (depending on how one defines and counts them), it can be understood that the level and quality of available language materials differ widely. Some areas have horse-and--buggy works, with a few early automobile works; others have advanced to late automobiles with a few modern airplanes; and a few languages have some jet-age materials. For example, when the Army's "Spoken Turkish" came out in the mid 1940's, it was an enormous improvement over any other teaching aid for spoken Turkish; but today, we need a 1975 model car for the Turkish highways. When I began to study Mongolian in the early 1950s, the instructional material available was only in Russian, French and German, and ranged from 1830 to 1940 in age. Today, the materials I use to teach Mongolian are all in English, and have been composed and printed in the last 15, or at most 20 years. Hence, there is no doubt that in some areas really significant progress has been made compared with 20 years ago. Still, even what was written ten years ago can profit from some revision and improvement, just as what is written today may prove inadequate for the needs of 1990, a short 15 years away. Let me use another personal example, which illustrates at my expense. Materials and aids have so advanced in Mongolian, that I can now teach in three years what it took me, I feel, about 7 years to learn with older resources. In the future, it may still require three years to instruct in a language, but we shall be

teaching more and better during that time. This is the normal path of science.

Redefinition of the Basic Tools of Access

Many of the language and linguistic books prepared under previous projects were geared to an intensive course with 15 or more contact hours per week, and aimed at teaching students to speak that language. Circumstances have now changed, and so have our goals. Few universities today would wish to offer intensive courses in such "exotic" languages, but were they to do so, the books for them are now available, thanks to these prior projects.

What is needed today are not "Basic Courses", but solid reference works, such as detailed grammars, full-scale dictionaries, and readers that embrace a wide range of literature; in other words, high-level basic linguistic tools, to be used by small classes, or by individuals working on their own. There is an urgent need for bibliographies which can guide those interested towards the tools they need, and a need for more sophisticated works focussed on the basic, background issues of Uralic-Altaic and Inner Asian linguistics. The existence of such tools would ensure the maintenance of a minimum but high-level national preparedness in any or all of the Uralic and Altaic languages and in Tibetan.

The catchword is not "Chuvash for the masses!", but the

development and maintenance of a relatively small group of specialists ready and prepared to face emergencies and constituting a reserve of national expertise.

The Tools of Access

MANUAL — A Student's one-volume self-contained treatise, giving area information, basic grammar (phonology, morphology, syntax), with some reading selections and a glossary to them as a sort of mini-dictionary.

REFERENCE GRAMMAR — A comprehensive scholar's and linguist's reference tool covering the history and formation of that language, with detailed sections on sounds, forms, processes, etc.

READER — A moderate to extensive sampling of modern materials in the target language, graded in difficulty and with explanatory notes, incorporating a full glossary.

DICTIONARIES
- Students: a medium-sized work of 4 to 6 thousand entries to cover material needed in the first and second years
- Reference: a full-scale usage dictionary (not just a word list of equations), probably including at least 10,000 entries for use by all levels including scholars.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES — With a thorough knowledge of the works created in the past, both good and bad, one can avoid duplication and repetition when composing significant new works. A well-organized bibliography, with proper headings and explanations, and transitions, can be a learning aid of much value. These should be created for all the major linguistic groups of Altaic.

Priorities

Rather than assigning levels of urgency to individual projects, as an obvious A, B or C rating, we prefer to indicate this by the types of language materials recommended as necessary. Thus, a critical, interesting but small language at present needs first and foremost a MANUAL in English. Languages of larger population and status, and which already have some useable materials, need a Reference Grammar, with parallel Readers and Dictionaries.

It is urgently hoped that the Program will remain sufficiently open and adaptable to allow for topics not envisaged at this time. By this, we mean that a Manual, Reference Grammar, Reader or Dictionary for any Uralic or Altaic language, when prepared by a qualified researcher in the area, should always be suppo table. The project must be so conducted as to be safe from grant-hunters and language-collectors, and chief consideration should be given to persons who are committed to continuing and continuous study in this field. This is not a closed-shop policy, but a practical means to ensure creation of the national reserve of expertise.

In other words, instead of setting up categories that say, We Need A Grammar of Squish, one should say, If scholar X or Y writes on Squish, it will certainly be a worthwhile contribution.

OVERVIEW

Linguistic Areas for Development of Priority Language Materials

URALIC: including general works, Finnish, Estonian, Hungarian, and Finno-Ugric languages of the USSR (Cheremis, Mordvin, etc.)

ALTAIC:
1. General Works
2. Turkish of the Republic of Turkey
3. Non-USSR Turkic: Iran, Balkans, Afghanistan, CPR
4. Turkic languages of the USSR
5. General and Reference works for Turkic
6. Mongolian of the MPR
7. Non-MPR Mongolian: in the USSR, the CPR, in Afghanistan
8. General and Reference works for Mongolian
9. Tungusic Materials

TIBETAN: Recommended items

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URALIC Recommendations

Uralic Reader: to give samples of each Uralic language, suitable for analysis. An essential for a basic, introductory course in Uralic linguistics.

Uralic Bibliography: a comprehensive linguistic bibliography evaluating old and new works in the area. A basic reference tool.

English to Finno-Ugric Vocabularies by Semantic Categories. A tool for access to shared vocabulary items.

Estonian Etymological Dictionary. A full-scale treatment of the entire range of the Estonian language.

Hungarian Reference Grammar

Hungarian Literary Reader (The brief work by John Lotz dates from 1938, and is quite incomplete).

Mordvin Reference Grammar; Mordvin Dictionary; Mordvin Reader

OTHER WORKS as proposed by qualified persons

ALTAIC LANGUAGES

1. General Works

Altaic Bibliography: comprehensive listing of articles, books and materials, alphabetically by author, with indications of holding library in the US. Can be compiled from the separate classified bibliographical items proposed below.

Altaic Language Names: An alphabetical listing of current and historical Altaic language names, to be a sort of handbook with data on census, literary, language allegiance, bi-lingualism, and geo-political data.

Ethnonymic Dictionary of Altaic Tribal Names: a basic tool for historical and linguistic research. Many important early tribal names are still found in surprising parts of the Altaic world. Study of these transferences will cast light on Altaic linguistic situations.

Altaic Reader: To give samples of each Altaic language, to serve as material for analysis; an essential instructional tool for the basic study of Altaic linguistics.

Comparative Altaic Phonology: (The work on this topic by N. Poppe is now over 15 years old, is written in German, and was not a USOE project)

Comparative Altaic Morphology: A high-level scholarly work is envisaged.

Other Topics Valuable for Investigation

The Creation of Literary Languages, and problems of their standardization for Altaic peoples, whether in USSR, CPR, etc.

Linguistic Inter-relationships, in connection with the Altaic genetic theory, as between Mongolian-Turkic, or between Mongolian-Tunguz.

Influence of Outside languages on Altaic languages, as Russian upon Altaic literary languages as a result of Soviet linguistic policy; influence of Chinese upon Altaic languages in the CPR, etc.

Problem of Genetic relationship vs. Contact relationship in the Altaic Group

Influences of Literary Languages upon Dialects, e.g. the levelling effect of literary language upon dialects with examples drawn from Altaic languages

2. Turkish of the Republic of Turkey

Ottoman Reader: To enable people to read all texts prior to 1928.

Turkish Dialects in Anatolia and the Balkans

Dialect Atlas of Turkish Dialects in Turkey; combined with, or separately, Dialect Description Project; a Dictionary of Turkish Dialects

3. Non-USSR Turkic: Iran, Balkans, Afghanistan, CPR

The Turkic languages of Iran and Afghanistan

A Dialect Atlas of Turkic languages in Iran and Afghanistan (together with, or separately, a Dialect Description Project and Dictionary)

The Turkic Languages of China

MANUAL of East Turki

East Turki Reference Grammar
East Turki Reader
East Turki Dictionary

MANUALS for: Lobnor Turkic, Salar, Saryg Uighur

OTHER WORKS: as proposed by qualified investigators

4. TURKIC LANGUAGES OF THE USSR

Union Republics

Manual of Kazakh
Kazakh Reference Grammar
Kazakh Reader

Manual of Azerbaidzhani
Azerbaidzhani Reader
Azerbaidzhani Reference Grammar
Azerbaidzhani Dictionary

Manual of Turkmen
Turkmen Reference Grammar
Turkmen Reader
Turkmen Dictionary

Kirghiz Reference Grammar
Kirghiz Reader
Kirghiz Dictionary

Uzbek Dictionary

Autonomous Republics

Manual of Karakalpak

Karakalpak Reference Grammar / Reader / Dictionary

Manual of Tuvan

Tuvan Reference Grammar / Reader / Dictionary

Tatar: Reference Grammar / Reader / Dictionary

Bashkir: Reference Grammar / Reader / Dictionary

Chuvash: Reference Grammar / Reader / Dictionary

Yakut: Reference Grammar / Reader / Dictionary

Other Areas of the USSR

Manuals for: Gagauz (Moldavia and Ukraine)

Kumyk (Dagestan)

Karachay-Balkar (Karachay-Cherkesk AO)

Nogay (Dagestan; Stavropolsk Kray)

Altai (Gorno-Altai AO)

Khakass (Khakass AO)

OTHER WORKS as proposed and evaluated by qualified personnel

5. General and Reference Works for Turkic; Theoretical Works; Specifics

Bibliographical Guide to Turkic Linguistics

Turkic Reader: giving samples of each Turkic language with a view to analysis, as an essential study aid in introductory Turkic linguistics

Comparative Turkic Morphology. Furnishing a key to all Turkic languages, incorporating study of word formation, treatment of verb, etc.

English to Turkic Vocabularies by Semantic Groupings. Enables comparative study by logical categories of culture and objects.

Early European sources of the Modern Turkic languages: texts, wordlists and dictionaries of the 17-18th centuries

Problems in Sub-stratum linguistics: Samoyed and Yenisei linguistic vestiges in South Siberian Turkic languages

Problems in Structural Influence: Effect of Persian syntax on Turkic syntax

6. Mongolian of the MPR

Modern (Cyrillic) Mongolian-English Dictionary. A large-scale

dictionary for contemporary social, political and technical usage is badly needed. Plans are underway to launch a joint cooperative effort among Indiana, Germany and the MPR Academy.

Student's Mongolian-English dictionary: a shorter work for use by students during the first two years of study

Written Mongolian Reader. Use of the old script is still quite widespread in the MPR, and there are numerous books and much material in vertical script written in the 20th century.

The Creation of Literary Khalkha and problems of its standardization

7. Non-MPR Mongolian: In the USSR, the CPR, in Afghanistan, overseas

Buryat-Mongolian: Reference Grammar / Reader / Dictionary

Kalmyk-Mongolian: Reference Grammar / Reader / Dictionary

Manuals for: Chakhar, Ordos, Monguor and others as properly sponsored

Literary Oirat-Mongolian Dictionary. (Although this script was abandoned in the USSR, Kalmyk Republic, about 1924, materials are still printed in it in the CPR)

The Mongolian Dialects of Afghanistan, together with a Dialect Atlas of Mongolian dialects in Afghanistan; Dictionary of Afghanistan Mongolian

The Creation of Literary Buryat and problems of its standardization

The Creation of Literary Kalmyk and problems of its standardization

8. General and Reference Works for Mongolian

Bibliography of Mongolian Linguistics with Evaluation of works

The Mongolian Languages and Dialects of the MPR

A Comparative Dictionary of the Mongolian languages

Early European sources of the Modern Mongolian vocabulary: texts, wordlists and dictionaries of the 17-18th centuries

Comparative Mongolian Morphology (incorporating studies in word formation, the Mongolian verb, etc.)

9. TUNGUSIC Materials

Reference Grammar of Manchu (still spoken in CPR)

Reader of Literary Manchu

Bibliographical Guide to Tunguz Linguistics

An Introduction to the Tunguz Languages

Comparative Tunguz Morphology (including word formation, Tunguz verb, etc.)

Early European Sources on modern Tunguz languages: texts, wordlists and dictionaries of the 17-18th centuries

Manuals, Reference Grammars, Dictionaries, and Readers, when proposed by properly qualified researchers, for such Tungusic languages as:

Even, Evenki, Nanay; Ulcha, Orok, Oroch, Udehe

TIBETAN

Tibetan-English literary dictionary with references to sources

Reference Grammar of Literary Tibetan

Literary Tibetan Reader

Reader for Tibetan Oral Literature

Other Bibliography

In addition to Materials Furnished for Conference

1. John Lotz, "The Uralic and Altaic Program of the American Council of Learned Societies, 1959-1965", Uralic and Altaic Series, (Bloomington, Indiana), vol.63, 1966. 45pp.

   A brief history and listing of the 116 projects commissioned and finished under this program, with information as to authors, publication, etc. The contents have been incorporated into the Blass-Johnson-Gage Survey, and in the USOE List No.7 furnished to Conference Members.

2. Denis Sinor, "INNER ASIA: A Syllabus", Uralic and Altaic Series (Bloomington, Indiana), vol.69, 1969. 261pp.

   Excellent general introduction to the history of Altaic peoples for the last thousand years, with survey of languages, dialects, geography, contacts with other cultures, influences, etc. Intended as a beginning point for college courses needing to incorporate material about Altaic peoples.

3. Denis Sinor, "Uralic and Altaic: The Neglected Area", in Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, vol.356, November, 1964, pages 86-92.

   Concise statement of the Inner Asian and Uralic-Altaic area, its languages, and the place and use of linguistic study in it.

4. Denis Sinor, "Inner Asia - Central Eurasia", in INDO-ASIA, issue 3 for 1974, pages 214-222.

   Defines the Inner Asian and Central Eurasian area in history, geography and politics.

5. John R. Krueger, "Altaic Linguistic Reconstruction and Culture", in Diachronic, Areal and Typological Linguistics, Current Trends in Linguistics, vol.11, Mouton, 1973, pages 569-581.

   Briefly sets forth current pro's and con's of Altaic genetic and typological relationships.

6. John R. Krueger, "Altaic Languages: An Overview", in Linguistics in South West Asia and North Africa, Current Trends in Linguistics, vol.6, Mouton, 1972, pages 179-182.

   Treats the Altaic languages in Asia Minor, viz., Turkic in Iran, Afghanistan, etc. See further in the same volume fuller discussion of Irano-Altaica by G. Doerfer.